

CALIFORNIA POISON CONTROL SYSTEM

POISON SAFETY UPDATE

Summer Bite & Sting Prevention | June 2023, Issue 8



Prevent Poisonous Bites and Stings

Bites and stings are common all year round, but they are more likely to happen during warmer months, when more people head outdoors. Visit the following webpages for general bites and stings prevention tips:



- calpoison.org/about-poisonous-bites
- calpoison.org/about-insect-stings

One particularly dangerous bite comes from rattlesnakes, which can be found across the state of California. Visit our rattlesnake webpage or watch “Close Calls with CPCS: Rattlesnakes” on YouTube, to learn more about bite prevention and ways to get help.

- calpoison.org/about-rattlesnakes
- youtu.be/Nve9F080oUI

CPCS Poison Hotline

“Wonderful! Honestly, I appreciate that it was a faster phone call than trying to get through to my doctor’s office. They answered my questions just as well.” —CPCS Caller

Stay poison safe this summer by saving the Poison Hotline, **1-800-222-1222**, into your phone now. When you call, you will receive fast, free, and expert help on any poison-related emergency or question.

CPCS Hotline Staff Spotlight

What is your role at CPCS and how long have you been a poison expert?

I am the Medical Director of the San Diego Division of the California Poison Control System. I was recruited in 1991 as the lead medical toxicologist for my division and have been with CPCS since. As the Medical Director, I oversee the guidelines for my Poison Center and advise our specialists with reliable poison information and treatment advice given to callers over the phone. I am there to support our providers, especially when more serious poison exposure cases arise. Additionally, I provide our staff with education during staff meetings and conferences, as well as educate pharmacy students participating in clinical rotations through our medical center.

I became passionate about toxicology when I was completing my fellowship program in

Phoenix and learned about envenomation—the injection of venom into a victim, usually through a bite or a sting. This passion led me to collaborate and work with San Diego Zoo on antivenoms. I also have published in scientific journals, advancing research in the field of toxicology. Some of my recent published works include *Crouching Zookeeper, Hidden Dragon: A Case of a Komodo Dragon Bite* and *Reversible Neurotoxicity Due To Excessive Use of Ethyl Chloride*.

Tell us about yourself: I completed my undergraduate degree from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg in Virginia, and received my medical degree from the Medical College of Virginia. I completed my residency training in Emergency Medicine at Allegheny General in Pittsburgh, and

completed my toxicology fellowship at the Good Samaritan Medical Center in Phoenix. I grew up along Chesapeake Bay and now reside in southern California. I enjoy the water and the outdoors. Swimming, fishing, skiing, biking, and hiking are a few of my favorite activities.



Dr. Clark is the Medical Director of the San Diego Division of the California Poison Control System (CPCS) and has been the lead medical toxicologist for that division since CPCS’ inception.

“I’m amazed at the diversity of poisoning. Every day is different. Every call is different. Helping someone get over their exposure is rewarding.”

—Dr. Clark

Guess the Poison!

HINT #1: I am a squishy animal capable of swimming. I have an umbrella-shaped body and leg-like structures containing venom. You can find me in coastal waters or stranded on beaches.

HINT #2: My stings can cause itching, rashes, and pain. Pain is the main symptom, but more severe reactions include shock and hypotension.

To prevent getting stung, keep your distance and do not touch me.

HINT #3: Vinegar is a popular home remedy for my stings. But it can actually release more venom and worsen the pain. Always call the Poison Hotline for the best treatment advice for stings like mine

WHAT AM I?

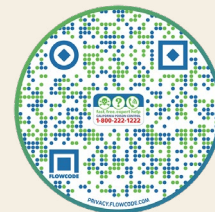
ANSWER: Jellyfish (Sea Jelly)

CPCS Resources

Have you watched the “Close Calls with CPCS” video series? Check them out today on our [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)!

- Ep 1: Rattlesnakes
- Ep 2: Acetaminophen
- Ep 3: Toxic Plants
- Ep 4: Button Battery
- Ep 5: Fentanyl

Access free additional resources at flow.page/calpoison or by scanning the QR code.



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